

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-35 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1-7 stand withdrawn from consideration pursuant to a Restriction Requirement. In view of the following remarks, applicants request re-examination of the claims.

Claims 8-11 stand rejected under Section 102(b) over Taplan et al. (U.S. 6,032,662). The rejection is respectfully traversed because Taplan fails to teach or suggest the invention defined by the subject claims.

Taplan fails to teach or suggest a cooktop as defined in the subject claims. More specifically, it fails to teach a cooktop comprising a cooktop top, at least one burner head positioned in the cooktop top and having multiple burner ports and a fuel feed port, a burner box comprising a housing, at least one supply tube for feeding fuel to the burner head and a force member acting against the burner box to bias at least a portion of the supply tube upwardly into the fuel feed port of the burner head, and at least one attaching member connecting the cooktop top and the burner box.

Exemplary of the significant differences between the invention defined by the subject claims and the teaching of Taplan is the absence in Taplan of the required force member. Applicant requests that the Examiner carefully reconsider the position that items 4, 7, 8, 15 and 18 of Taplan satisfy the requirement for a force member in the subject claims. In the claimed invention, the force member acts against the burner box to bias the supply tube upwardly into the fuel feed port of the burner head. In contrast, the cited Taplan items act between the burner box and the cooktop. The cited items of

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Taplan do not act against the burner box to bias the supply tube upwardly into a fuel feed port of a burner head. In fact, the supply tube 19 of Taplan appears to be rigidly fixed to burner 9 of Taplan.¹ The key point in Taplan is to avoid any fixed rigid connection between the burner 9 and the cooktop 1. Item 4 of Taplan provides a biasing force between the burner and the cooktop. Item 8 is a fixed transverse plate as best seen in Figs. 2 and 4. Item 7, like item 4, is attached to the supply tube and biases (via the supply tube) the burner 9 upwardly relative to the cooktop. Item 15 is a helical spring, again biasing the burner relative to the cooktop rather than biasing the supply tube into a fuel feed port of the burner head. Finally, item 18 is a guide bolt shown in Fig. 6 and said by Taplan to replace the helical spring 15.

Note that in the present invention the burner can be rigidly attached to the cooktop top. See the specification, for example, at paragraph [22]. In contrast, as noted above, the key point in Taplan is to avoid any fixed attachment of the cooktop to the burner.

Accordingly, applicant believes the rejection is in error and should be withdrawn. Claims 12-34 stand rejected under Section 103(a) over Taplan. The rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons discussed above.

Each of claims 12-34 depends from claim 8 either directly or indirectly. Accordingly, each of claims 12-34 incorporates all of the limitations recited in claim 8. For this reason, the subject claims are patentable over Taplan for at least the reasons discussed above. In addition, each of claims 12-34 is further patentable over Taplan in view of the one or more additional limitations recited therein.

¹ The Examiner cites items 9 of Taplan as a "burner box". Rather, item 9 of Taplan appears to be the burner itself.

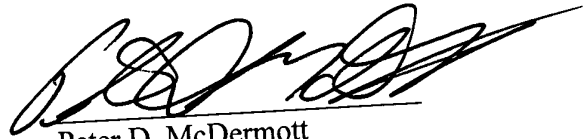
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Conclusion

In view of the forgoing, applicants request that all claims pending in the application be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

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